

Agriculture

cows, but he cannot get even a small loan. Inquiries after inquiries are made and all kinds of reasons are given; he has been a farmer for 42 years, he has three farm lands but he cannot get \$5,000. There should be a limit, Mr. Speaker, to people being laughed at, to Quebec farmers' being the laughing-stock.

Let us look at another table, concerning improvement works. Shed and farm building repairs. In Alberta, 450 loans were granted; in Saskatchewan, 500; in Quebec, 24. As regards repairs and improvement works, it is the same thing, the same ratio: 218 against 19; in works concerning fences and drainage, in Alberta, 149 loans were granted; in Saskatchewan, 78, in Quebec, none. I know they still get small loans in Quebec but I simply want to emphasize the discrimination shown there.

Mr. Roy (Laval): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): The hon. member for Laval on a point of order.

Mr. Roy (Laval): Would the hon. member allow me a question?

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I have only 20 minutes at my disposal and I intend to use all the time allotted to me. Then if I have some time left, I will reply to the hon. member.

I will permit him to ask me questions.

I have only 20 minutes, and moreover—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. If I do not misunderstand the remarks of the hon. member for Roberval, I do not think he is prepared to accept a question, and this is his right and his privilege. The hon. member for Roberval.

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): The minister of course is not aware of that, because if he were he would no longer let such things happen again. He would look more closely at that. I have myself worked with farmers to help them get loans, and I have been staggered. I was wondering why those loans were refused. Some will say: the farmers should borrow from the provincial government. But provincial government loans are not big enough and when farmers want bigger loans, they have to apply to the federal government. All things considered, they do not succeed at all in getting loans. And that is precisely why I wanted to draw the department's attention on this famous Farm Improvement Loans Act. Let no one tell me that fairy tale that we can get loans in Quebec. That does not help our big farmers who want to get organized and make progress, because I no longer believe in Quebec or in those loans.

The people in their—

Mr. Corriveau: Oh, oh! So you no longer believe in Quebec!

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): They can say oh, oh! all they want. We must not forget that my region has lost 42 per cent of its farmers in the last ten years and we should now

[Mr. Gauthier (Roberval).]

make both governments aware of the fact. In all fairness, something must be done to save the farmer.

Another point I want to raise is that of feed grains. Everyone knows that the East, particularly Quebec, is in absolute need of feed grains to compete with other farming areas and ensure its animal production of beef, hog and poultry. One does not need to have much imagination to see that. Earlier I heard the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) say: If we can get good prices this year, that is all we want, and the hell with the rest! That same hon. member wants to line his pockets during the good years without any consideration for other areas in Canada. Canada is not only the province of Quebec but it is not only the western provinces neither. Canada is all of the provinces. There is no room for that kind of reasoning. It is not reasonable to say: We will line our pockets as much as we can.

Judging from what some people say, the East and the West are two different countries. There is a price war going on between the two. Yet, we know that the central government is supposed to be there to ensure justice and balance. Westerners are taking advantage of the good years to get the highest prices possible at the expense of the East as a whole, including the province of Quebec, but come the bad years they will be very glad to see the eastern provinces help them out with their taxes.

When they have a surpluses let them think about the eastern provinces which are faithful and regular customers.

I would like to quote from a column published in *La Presse* following a meeting of the Quebec Agricultural Producers' Union. It says: The West is destroying the competitive position of Quebec farmers in collusion with the federal government, in collusion with federal ministers. For the last 30, 50 years federal ministers have always been Westerners. Let us have from time to time a minister from Quebec, so that he may talk on behalf of the Quebec government. I do not blame the present minister, because I know him very well and he is one of the most honest. But in our province, people ask us: When are you going to appoint a federal minister from Quebec so he may talk on behalf of the eastern provinces? I think time has come to wake up, to think, to bring back equity.

The president of the Farm Producers' Union wrote the following: for the past 30 years, Quebec agriculture has been dependent on the mood of the heads of the Canadian Wheat Board which is in Winnipeg. And I would add that it is more powerful than this government. Quebec has always feared that the monopolistic powers of that board jeopardize the growth of agriculture in la Belle Province. But what happened during the 1969-71 period shows that the concern of Quebec farmers was grounded since production of goods such as eggs, hog, poultry has moved west over that period. In hog production alone during that period, production went up by more than 80 per cent in the west, while it increased by only 10 per cent in Quebec. These figures show that feed grains are an important factor in this area, for they are essential to egg, hog and poultry production.

We want to make two points here: the first, brought forward by the west, is that the increase results from the comparative advantages of the west; the second, made by